

Hamilton Development Corporation
July 6, 2016, 2016

The Hamilton Development Corporation met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 6, 2016, 2016 with Brian Stein, Rick Mitchell and Tom Goodwin present. Selectman Jeffrey Hubbard and Community Projects Coordinator Dorr Fox were also present.

Call to order

Brian Stein called the HDC meeting to order at 7:32 a.m.

Warrant for bills #1623

The HDC reviewed for approval the HDC warrant #1623 in the amount of \$245.20 for staff time and the utility bills for the Willow Street property.

Tom Goodwin moved to approve HDC warrant #1623. Rick Mitchell seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Warrant for bills #1701

The HDC reviewed for approval the HDC warrant #1701 in the amount of \$1988.00 for the mortgage and Harborlight Community Partners oversight for the Willow Street property.

Mr. Goodwin moved to approve HDC warrant #1701. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

59/63 Willow Street

Mr. Stein noted that the sign at the Willow Street property had been fixed. It had been hit by a truck. The wires are fixed and the cones are gone. The survey of the property is in progress. It should be completed soon. At that time, it will be determined whether the tree the neighbor is concerned about is on HDC property. He noted that no-one has received calls regarding renting the commercial space. The members discussed whether it may be appropriate to advertise in another newspaper, such as the Salem News or have it listed with a realtor. It was also suggested that the HDC could discuss the topic with some of the downtown merchants.

Hamilton Downtown Improvements / Downtown Merchants Association

Mr. Stein stated that he had spoken to a woman from Timeless Interiors. She told him that there is still a merchants group, however they do not meet very often. She told him that she is interested in the group becoming more active. Don Robinson, the owner of 300 Main is the head of the organization. Mr. Hubbard stated that he would contact him.

Mr. Stein suggested meeting with the group in late summer to discuss a targeted project, such as a website or insurance for an event. Mr. Mitchell suggested setting a specific date. Mr. Stein stated that the goal is to make the downtown more vibrant. Mr. Goodwin inquired whether there was a chamber of commerce in town. Mr. Stein noted that there was not.

Mr. Mitchell stated that he would like to see that the merchants association is motivated to have a project happen before putting funds towards it. Mr. Hubbard stated that the members of the association have heard the HDC interest several times before. Mr. Goodwin inquired about the Hamilton-Wenham Village Plan that was completed by MAPC. Mr. Hubbard stated that the merchants association has not gone over it thoroughly. However, there is a list of things that they would like to see completed. Mr. Mitchell inquired why this list had not been completed. Mr. Hubbard stated that the HDC has control over the money from the meals tax, however nothing has been done. He had been working with Dave Carey on the project. Mr. Mitchell noted that the HDC has given the Town a check. Mr. Stein noted that the check was for \$6500 and that a check for \$10,000 will also be given.

Mr. Hubbard stated that the Board of Selectmen need to take a vote and instruct the Town Manager to take action. Mr. Stein stated that the merchants association needs to target the projects that they want. The Town also needs to determine whether they wish to use more tax dollars to do downtown projects, since the meals tax only goes so far. Mr. Hubbard stated that there needs to be more crosswalks and a sidewalk in front of 300 Main. Mr. Mitchell stated that the crosswalk needs to be more prominent. It needs to be more visible and one should be able to feel it when they go over it. Mr. Stein stated that they need to get the Town Manager on Board before the DPW will do the work. Mr. Stein stated that the HDC needs to talk with the merchants before going to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Mitchell inquired about the town survey results. The HDC members concurred that it would be good to get the results of the survey.

Mr. Goodwin stated that the HDC owns one parcel of land. With their development of the site, they can lead by example. Mr. Stein noted that through the project, the HDC can obtain grants for infrastructure, such as sidewalks. Mr. Mitchell stated that this could be a process that leads the rest of the downtown community. Mr. Hubbard stated that the good news for the merchants is that there are funds available. Mr. Mitchell added that the funds could be used for a project. Mr. Goodwin noted that they need to talk to the merchants association about the infrastructure improvements that they want.

The members updated Mr. Hubbard on the Willow Street project. Mr. Stein noted that there were no responses to the RFP. Mr. Mitchell stated that potential developers had concerns over permitting and that the payback for the project was not great in relation to the permitting risk. Mr. Stein added that there is some interest from a developer who is willing to give them advise to craft the project during the permitting phase. They will also be working with an attorney to give them legal advise. Mr. Goodwin stated that the attorney is John Smolek , an attorney from Andover. Mr. Mitchell stated that the HDC will take the project through permitting and then market the project. Mr. Hubbard inquired whether the HDC had thought of selling the project at a loss to the Institution for Savings. Mr Mitchell stated that they could respond to the RFP.

Mr. Hubbard mentioned having white lights in the trees on Railroad Avenue as a project. Mr. Stein and Mr. Mitchell stated that the HDC looked into this for Christmas. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Town needs to supply the infrastructure. Mr. Stein noted that they could use solar lights, otherwise they would need power. He noted that they could have them year round. Mr. Mitchell inquired whether the Town had funded the 4th of July fireworks. It was noted that they had, along with the Community House.

For the next meeting (July 20th), it was determined that they should have the completed survey, they would have consulted their attorney and Mr. Stein and Mr. Gisness will have looked into developing a plan for the Willow Street site. Dorr Fox explained that he had looked into finding a procurement officer. The HDC members suggested contacting Alison Jenkins.

Mr. Goodwin moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 a.m. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Dorr Fox, Community Projects Coordinator

ATTEST: _____
Brian Stein, President

